



ACCREDITED BY THE NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027

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Trinity Catholic Academy
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Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome back to our returning families, and a heartfelt welcome to those who are new to the Trinity Catholic Academy community. We are so glad you are here.

As I begin my sixth year as principal, I am filled with gratitude for the strength, faith, and spirit that defines Trinity. Your dedication to Catholic education and to nurturing your children academically and spiritually is a true gift to our school.

Please take time to review the 2026-2027 Parent/Student Handbook. It contains important information about school policies and procedures and is a helpful reference throughout the year. Updates from last year are in red for easy reference.

After reviewing the handbook, please sign and return the Handbook Agreement Form to confirm that you have read and understand the policies for the upcoming school year.

Thank you for the trust you place in us each day. I look forward to a wonderful year together as we continue to grow in faith, knowledge, and love.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Angela Symock
Principal

“We cannot all do great things, but we can do small things with great love.”
— **Mother Teresa**

Mission Statement Diocese of Worcester

As individuals, families and parishes, our mission as the Diocese of Worcester is to respond joyfully to Christ's call to become more fully the People of God.

Though imperfect, we are a blessed people striving to participate in Christ's mission of reaching out to all. Therefore, we accept the Gospel challenge, which calls us to bring another to a deeper knowledge and love of God.

Since God calls us to live in community in the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves in this time and place to becoming a prayerful and faith-filled Church that truly reflects the glory of God.

Mission Statement of Trinity Catholic Academy

Trinity Catholic Academy, a Pre-K to Grade 8 STREAM school, promotes academic excellence, the arts, athletics, and character through respect, compassion, and service, among our diverse family, inspired and guided by the wonder, beauty, and power of the Holy Trinity.

Updated May 2022

PHILOSOPHY

Trinity Catholic Academy follows the Catholic Bishops' call to foster personal spirituality, social justice, and academic excellence per the Diocese of Worcester Curriculum Guide. Its goals are to:

1. Develop students' Christian character, respect for life, and reverence for faith.
2. Provide strong religious education through Catholic theology, Scripture, liturgy, and service.
3. Support intellectual, social, and physical growth through diverse instructional methods.
4. Help students assess their abilities and future vocational possibilities.

TCA believes every child has the right to education that matches their God-given abilities, forming today's learners into tomorrow's responsible citizens.

A Brief History

In 1889, the first Catholic religious sisters arrived in Southbridge at the request of the pastor of St. Mary's Parish to open a school for the growing Catholic community of Southbridge. In less than 40 years, the original handful of Catholic settlers had grown into two parishes and continued to grow. A century and a half later, Trinity Catholic Academy is the continuing presence of this first Catholic school, offering classes from pre-school through grade eight.

From its inception and continuing until 1990, St. Mary's Elementary School has had a place in the educational communities of Southbridge, Sturbridge and Charlton. For most of its existence, the school was housed in the former St. Peter's Building, the first Catholic Church in Southbridge. This building was lost in December of 1999 to a devastating fire, but the spirit and the heart of the school lives on in St. Mary's parish, now Saint John Paul II Parish.

St. Mary's elementary school faced many challenges during the 1980's including declining enrollment in both the elementary school and the high school. A name change occurred in 1989 and St. Mary's elementary school and Marianhill High School became Trinity Catholic Academy. This new school housed students in grades pre-

k through 12. Again, declining enrollment forced a hard look at what was offered in Southbridge. The high school section of Trinity Catholic Academy closed after graduation in 1990. Trinity Catholic Academy, a pre-K through grade 8 school, emerged. The transition was not smooth, but TCA continues to offer academic excellence spirited by the Gospel.

The school now has an Endowment Fund, which gives it the financial stability it lacked in its most recent past. The one hundred families, who comprise the heart of Trinity Catholic Academy, continue to hold fast to the long-held tradition of Catholic Education in southwestern Worcester County.

On July 1, 2011, St. Mary's Parish, along with Notre Dame of the Sacred Heart and St. Hedwig's Parish were blended into a new parish. Trinity Catholic Academy is now proud to be a part of the new Saint John Paul II parish.

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ACADEMICS

Academic Information

Academic Standards

Trinity Catholic Academy follows academic standards as established by the Worcester Diocese. These standards consist of a fusion of Massachusetts State Frameworks, the Common Core State Standards, and Diocese of Hartford Standards. Trinity Catholic Academy offers students opportunities for growth in the following major subjects:

Religion

Catholic doctrine and tradition, Bible study, Social Justice and other topics.

Student-led Liturgical services are held each month for the entire school community. Grades K-8 attend daily mass once per week.

Computer Literacy

Microsoft Office skills, Google Classroom and Integration with Curricular Subjects.

Fine Arts

Music, Visual Arts, Art, Chorus, Drama and Instrumentals

Handwriting

Students in Grades K-2 learn proper letter formation and pencil grip using the Zaner-Bloser series. Cursive handwriting is introduced in Grade 2 and reinforced through grade 5.

Language Arts

Reading, English, Spelling, Vocabulary, Composition, Research Skills, and Appreciation of Literature.

Mathematics

Essential mathematical skills in Grades K-5

Grade 6

Grade 6 students will prepare for pre-algebra by becoming proficient in number sense, operations with decimals and fractions, interpreting data, customary and metric measurement, perimeter, and area. They will work with expressions and equations and will be introduced to integers, ratios, and percentages.

Grade 7

Grade 7 students will take Pre-Algebra Part I. Students will use their knowledge of decimals, fractions, and integers to solve for the variable in one-step and two-step equations and inequalities. They will study ratio, direct and inverse proportion, and percents and their applications.

Grade 8

Grade 8 students will take Pre-Algebra Part II. Students will study data analysis and two and three-dimensional geometry. They will be introduced to probability, relations and functions and polynomials.

Physical Education

Physical fitness program for each grade, with a focus on the understanding of life-long physical fitness.

Science

General Sciences and Laboratory Experiences.

Social Studies

Geography, Economics, United States History, World History, and Current Events.

Spanish (Grades 6-8)

Vocabulary, common expressions, grammar, conversation, and culture.

S.T.R.E.A.M (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, and Math)

STREAM education is in place to enhance curriculum.

Awards

Presidential Award for Educational Excellence

Grade 8: for as many students who fit the criteria

Criteria:

- +Maintain a 90% average
- +High achievement in reading or math on standardized testing

Presidential Award for Academic Achievement

Grade 8: for as many students who fit the criteria

Criteria:

- +Show outstanding growth, improvement, commitment or intellectual development in the academic subjects

Valedictorian Award

Grade 8: for the student(s) with the highest cumulative average in their 8th grade year.

Salutatorian Award

Grade 8: for the student(s) with the second highest cumulative average in their 8th grade year.

Individual Awards for Excellence in Religion, Science, Social Studies, Math, Language Arts, Literature, Music, Physical Education, Art, Spanish, and Technology

Grade 8:

Criteria:

- +Displays effort and cooperation in class
- +Academic Achievement
- +Exhibits interest in the specific subject area
- +Active participation in class
- +Goes above and beyond what is expected in the curriculum

Trinity Spirit Award

Grade 8 award:

*Student(s) who exemplifies the spirit of the mission of Trinity Catholic Academy.

Criteria:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| +Spirit of reverence | +Integrity |
| +Academic effort | +Evidence of service (willingness to help) |
| +Appropriate conduct | +Exhibits leadership |
| +Academic achievement | +Goes above and beyond the norm |
| +Respect for others | |

Additional Awards

Bishop Reilly Book Award

Grades 7: one student

Criteria: Outstanding Christian service given in honor of Bishop Reilly is awarded to a seventh-grade student who exemplifies the spirit of Bishop Reilly's motto "*in kindness and in truth*".

Spirit of Volunteerism Award—one student, one adult

This award is given in memory of Mrs. Suzanne Casey who served as Trinity Catholic Academy's volunteer nurse for many years. Each year a student (any grade) and an adult are recognized for their outstanding volunteer service to the TCA community.

Award for Citizenship (K-8) and Outstanding Performance (K-8)

Criteria:

- +Appropriate conduct
- +Academic achievement
- +Respect for others

Class Trips

Classes may fundraise to offset trip costs. All money raised belongs to Trinity Catholic Academy, which will pay trip expenses. Students must participate in fundraising to benefit from the funds, and tuition must be current to join the trip. If a trip is canceled due to circumstances beyond the school's control, such as but not limited to weather, emergencies, pandemics. The funds remain with the school for use at the principal's discretion.

Conferences

Conferences will be held during the first Trimester of the school year during a scheduled half-day; date and time will be announced. Grades 6–8 students lead their own conferences with parents and teachers. Non-academic topics require a separate appointment. Conferences are limited to 15 minutes, but additional meetings may be arranged anytime by contacting your teacher. Pre-K–5 students do not participate in parent conferences.

Field Trips

- Field trips support curricular goals and are reviewed annually.
- They are a privilege, not a right, and may differ by grade.
- Teachers and administration may restrict participation for academic or behavioral reasons.
- A signed official permission slip is required; verbal permission or notes are not accepted. Faxed permission slips are allowed.
- Parents may opt their child out of a field trip; non-participants stay home and are marked absent.
- It is Massachusetts State Law that students who are participating in the field trip must ride the bus **to and from** the field trip with their class. Students not on the bus may not participate in the field trip and will be counted absent for the day.
- Field trip fees are non-refundable.
- Only official chaperones may accompany the class; siblings or other individuals are not permitted. Individuals who are not “official” chaperones may not drive their car to a field trip destination with the plan of accompanying the class on the field trip. Our risk management insurance company insures the “official” chaperones and participation by unofficial chaperones jeopardizes the protection for our students and all other “official” adults on the trip.
- Chaperones must be 21+, complete Safe Environment training, and pass a CORI check.
- Chaperones may photograph children, but only images of their own child may be shared on social media.

Grading Scale/Progress Reports/Report Cards

A+ = 97 – 100

B+ = 87 – 89

C+ = 77-79

D = 65 - 69

A = 94 – 96

B = 84 – 86

C = 74 – 76

F = Below 65

A- = 90 – 93

B- = 80 – 83

C- = 70 - 73

Trinity Catholic Academy uses a trimester system. All students (PreK–8) receive progress reports and report cards three times per year; dates are on the monthly school calendar online.

Honor Roll (Grades 4–8):

- **High Honors:** No grade below A–
- **Honors:** No grade below B–
- No N's or U's in Conduct, Effort for any subject, including specials

Grades are based on written or oral classroom work, homework, quizzes, projects, tests, and participation/effort.

Teachers will contact parents if academic or behavioral concerns arise. If parents have any questions or concerns, they are urged to contact the teacher. The teacher will always be the first point of contact with regard to academic, social, and behavioral concerns.

If there is a concern about a student being retained for the following school year, teachers will contact parents promptly.

Homework

Homework reinforces learning, builds responsibility, and develops work habits and critical thinking. It may be assigned Monday–**Thursday** and should be completed neatly and on time. **We value the importance of family time and, as a result, do not assign regular homework on weekends. However, there may be occasions when long-term projects require students to complete work over the weekend. These moments provide valuable opportunities for students to practice and strengthen their time management skills.**

Time Guidelines:

- Kindergarten: 15 min
- Grades 1–2: 20–30 min
- Grades 3–4: 40–60 min
- Grades 5–8: 60–90 min

Long-term projects must meet due dates; late projects lose a full grade per day. Students in Grades 3–8 use assignment journals to foster independence. Parents can support by providing a quiet, comfortable workspace and ensuring assignments are completed.

Homework Assignment Journals

Grades 3–8 receive homework journals at the start of the year, with the fee deducted from the parent's FACTS account. Students record assignments daily; parents should check and sign them each night. Teachers may add notes on homework or behavior, and parents are encouraged to reply, fostering close home–school communication.

Library/Media Center

The school library and media center support curricular and recreational reading. Rules:

1. Return borrowed books on time and in good condition.
2. Pay for lost or damaged books before checking out new materials; report cards may be withheld until cleared.
3. Handle all electronic equipment with care.
4. No food or drink allowed.

Promotion Policy and Retention Policy

Promotion at Trinity Catholic Academy depends on academic performance, teacher recommendations, and readiness for advanced work. Students must pass all core subjects and maintain consistent attendance. When needed, the administration may require tutoring, summer school, or grade repetition after consulting with parents and teachers. Parents are notified promptly if a student risks failing a subject or grade.

Sacrament Programs

All sacrament programs are provided by your home parish. Trinity Catholic Academy acts as a support to those programs. Please contact your own parish to begin the process.

Service Projects

The stewardship program (Pre-K–8) gives students opportunities to serve the Church and community through ongoing, grade-specific projects.

Standardized Testing

MAP Growth testing for Grades 2–8 takes place in Fall, Winter, and Spring. Please ensure students are present, on time, and well rested, and avoid scheduling trips or appointments during testing days. No make-ups are offered for tardiness.

Title IX

Trinity Catholic Academy adheres to the tenets of Title IX: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

ADMINISTRATIVE

Admission Information

Nondiscriminatory Policy

Trinity Catholic Academy admits students of all races, colors, and national or ethnic origins to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

As openings become available, the following priorities will be used to accept students to Trinity Catholic Academy:

1. Present Trinity Catholic Academy Students
2. Siblings of children presently enrolled at Trinity Catholic Academy
3. Children of Alumni
4. Other

Important Admissions Disclaimer: All financial aid decisions are determined by Facts Tuition Management and the Diocese of Worcester. The principal and the pastor may add tuition assistance when available.

Children entering Kindergarten must be five (5) years of age by December 31st.

Children entering 4-year-old PreK must be four (4) years of age by December 31st.

Requirements include:

- Health Records
- Immunization Records
- Birth Certificate (city or town)
- Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants only)

Families applying for admission in Grades 1-8 must present a copy of the current report card, discipline record, and testing results. These will be reviewed to determine whether the program at Trinity Catholic Academy will meet the educational needs of the students. An interview with the family is part of the admission process. For complete admissions information, please visit our website: trinitycatholicacademy.org

All new students will be given a trial period on an individual basis in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are any problems, parents may be asked to withdraw their child from Trinity Catholic Academy.

Buckley Amendment

Trinity Catholic Academy adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) regarding privacy of student records and the rights of non-custodial parents. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to share any official custodial information decided through the court. Official custodial agreements will be kept in the student’s file in the main office. In the absence of any court document, the school will view each parent as having full legal custody of his/her child. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, non-custodial parents have the right to receive records about their child’s academic progress or lack thereof.

Custodial Rights

Parents must provide official custodial documents, which are kept in the student’s file. Without a court order, both parents are assumed to have full custody and the non-custodial parent may access academic records. Involving both parents benefits the child.

Financial Obligations

**TUITION SCHEDULE
SCHOOL YEAR – 2026-2027

FIRST – EIGHTH GRADE**

Tuition 1 st child.....	\$5670.00
Tuition 2 nd child.....	\$4900.00

KINDERGARTEN (ONLY FIVE DAYS) & PRE-K

Kindergarten/Pre-K Tuition per child	Full Day for 5 Days	\$5830.00
Pre-K Tuition per child	Full Day for 3 Days	\$4400.00

FINANCIAL AID ASSISTANCE FORMS are available ON-LINE at <https://online.factsmgt.com/aid>.
The deadline for applying for financial aid is announced around the first of the year. *The application to FACTS® Grant and Aid Assessment is published on our website: trinitycatholicacademy.org

Tuition is collected through the FACTS Management Company, not the school. FACTS offers the following tuition payment options:

- Pay in full by June 15, 2026
- Pay ½ annual tuition by June 15, 2026, and the remainder by December 15, 2026
- Pay ¼ annual tuition by June 15, 2026, September 15, 2026, December 15, 2026 and March 15, 2027
- Pay 10 payments from June to March due on the 15th of each month.

Enrollment/Re-Enrollment

- The \$200.00 new student registration fee for students in all grades must be submitted with the application. All fees are NON-REFUNDABLE.
- All students are charged \$100.00 (non-refundable) each to re-register yearly.
- Graduation Fee (Grade 8) ...\$150.00 (covers cost of retreat, graduation gowns, etc.)

Withdrawal Policy

- Families must notify the school in writing when a student is withdrawn from the school.
- Registered students who withdraw, **are asked to leave, or are expelled** between July 1, 2026, and **August 24, 2026**, will be charged one month of the total school year's tuition (based on ten months). For example: if the total tuition for the school year is \$5670, the charge will be \$567.
- Registered students who withdraw **are asked to leave, or are expelled** on **August 25, 2026, or after** will be charged one quarter of the total school year's tuition for any portion of a quarter registered. Payment quarters end on the last day of October, January, March, and the last day of school. Any part of a quarter that a student is in attendance will be counted as a full quarter of attendance when determining the amount of tuition to be charged.
- The school will not forward records for students who withdraw **are asked to leave, or are expelled** with an outstanding balance.
- Refunds may take up to 60 days to process.

Agenda Books

- For grades 3-8, the cost of the student's agenda book will be deducted from the parent's FACTS account.

PLEASE ADDRESS ALL TUITION QUESTIONS TO THE SCHOOL.

Fundraising Obligations

Each full-time family household will be responsible for \$250.00 worth of fundraising per year. This amount is over and above the present tuition you are paying. The *first* budget fundraiser is the annual Magazine Drive in September. The expectation for this fundraiser is \$150.00 per family household. We will allow \$1.00 credit for every \$2.00 in sales. **Each family household must bring in \$300.00 worth of sales to receive a credit of \$150.00.** (If you sell \$250.00, you will receive a credit of \$125.00 toward that \$150.00 goal and be billed through FACTS after the Christmas Calendar Drive for the \$25.00 balance.) The *second* budget fundraiser will be our annual Christmas Calendar. **Each full-time family household is required to sell 10 calendars.** These calendars will have a dollar-for-dollar value. You are expected to sell \$100.00 worth of calendars. (If you only sell 8 calendars you will be charged the \$20.00 balance due in January.) Please call the office if you need clarification of fundraising charges.

Friday out-of-dress code incentives are offered for those families reaching the \$300.00 magazine drive goal. Twenty (20) out of dress code passes are given to the family to be shared. If you should reach over \$400.00 the family receives an out-of-dress code pass for the year. There are no incentives offered for Christmas Calendars. Families choosing not to participate in the fundraisers are not eligible for the incentives.

Two other major fundraisers for the school are our annual golf tournament and our Silent Auction. There is no out of pocket expense for these fundraisers unless you choose to play golf or buy tickets to the auction. There are committees that work on these fundraisers, and they would always welcome your help.

After School Program

The After-School Program offers care and activities for Pre-K–8 students from 2:45–5:30 p.m., starting on the first day of school. Monthly fees are billed through FACTS at \$8 per hour; pickups after 5:30 incur a \$10

late fee. Students not picked up by 3:00 are sent to the program and charged. The last day of the program will be announced.

Home-School Communication

Weekly Principal updates are sent through TeacherEase. School notices are posted on our website (trinitycatholicacademy.org) and Facebook page (TCABobcatParents). School-wide emergencies are communicated through TeacherEase by both email and phone. Pre-K – 5th grade receives weekly newsletters from homeroom teachers. Grades 6-8 receive bi-weekly newsletters from homeroom teachers. Parents may email teachers; however, messages received on evenings, weekends, or school vacations will be answered on the next school day.

Insurance

The school insurance policy covers out of pocket costs when a child is hurt at school or while playing a school sponsored sport. (Parents' health insurance will be used first; the school insurance would cover deductibles or expenses not covered by personal health insurance.)

Office Hours

The school office is open on all school days from **8:00 AM – 3:00 PM**. The school office will be open from Monday – Thursday **9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** during the summer. We will also close for vacations in July/August.

Office Records

Parents/guardians must notify the office in writing of any changes to addresses, phone numbers, emails, or emergency contacts to keep records accurate and up to date.

Release of Student Records

The school maintains records of all students. The only records kept in a student file are academic transcripts, standardized testing, custodial information, and family information/emergency sheet.

Trinity Catholic Academy adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records. **Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the US Mail.** No records will be given to parents or to other parties to transport to the new school.

Parents/guardians requesting records/transcripts/recommendations must make a written five school-day request to the school office. All forms should be submitted to the Trinity Catholic Academy Office for distribution. Completed forms will be sent via the U.S. Mail. Special handling will require that all postal fees be paid by the parents. All fees must be paid before records are forwarded.

No records will be sent to transferring schools of students whose financial commitment is in arrears.

Transfer of Students

Parents must notify the principal in writing before withdrawing a student. Records will be released only after all accounts are settled. (See previous section on Student Records for transcript information.)

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

Absence

Massachusetts General Laws require compulsory attendance for school age children.

When a student is absent from school, a parent must call the office by 8:30 AM each day of the absence. If the office is not notified by telephone, a parent will be contacted. This policy is for the protection of the students. Please do not depend on email notification as teachers might not check email before the start of school.

Students must be fever free for 24 hours without medication to attend school. Students who are sent home during the school day with a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher will not be allowed to return to school the next day. Likewise, if a child is vomiting before coming to school, (s)he should not be brought to school. If a child is sent home because of vomiting, the child may return to school if free of vomiting for 24 hours. If a student is prescribed antibiotics they are not to return to school until 24 hours after the first dose.

The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child’s learning process. Missed assignments are the student’s responsibility.

Students who are absent due to illness have one day for each day of absence to make up the missed assignments, quizzes or tests. For example, a student who was absent three days would be given three days to complete the missed work. Extenuating circumstances will be left at the discretion of the teacher.

When a student is absent for **two or more days due to illness**, a parent must email the homeroom teacher on the second day before noon time requesting make up work for their child. Homework assignments may be picked up at the school office between 3:00 PM – 3:30 PM.

Students who are absent only one day will get their missed assignments from their teacher when they return to school.

If a child is sick for more than 4 days in a row, a note from the child’s doctor stating the reason for absence, date of the doctor’s visit and the date the child can return to school must be provided upon returning to school.

The principal will review each case of a student with 15 or more absences for possible loss of credit for the academic school year. Excessive absences could result in retention.

Attendance Guidelines

All absences, dismissals and tardiness will be considered “unexcused” except for the following. The following absences are defined as **excused** absences at the school:

- **Illness covered by a physician’s note:** The school reserves the right to request medical documentation in case of chronic absenteeism. (Ten (10) absences in one trimester is chronic absenteeism.) If your child is going to have an extended absence due to medical reasons, please notify the school nurse and principal.
- **Hospitalization:** The parent/guardian needs to submit to the school release papers from the hospital documenting the student’s hospitalization.
- **Religious holy days:** The student’s religion requires that the student does not attend school on the specific holy day or that school attendance would interfere with the required religious observances. The parent/guardian notifies the school in writing before or after the absence.
- **Death in the family:** The parent/guardian notifies the school in writing before or after the absence.

Any other absence will be considered unexcused. Unexcused Absence is defined as a day of missed school without permission or a valid reason. If a student is tardy, a parent must accompany the student to the front door where the student will be buzzed in and report to the main office.

I NEED TO STAY HOME IF...						
I HAVE A FEVER	I AM VOMITING	I HAVE DIARRHEA	I HAVE A RASH	I HAVE HEAD LICE	I HAVE AN EYE INFECTION	I HAVE BEEN IN THE HOSPITAL
Temperature of 100.4 or higher	Within the past 24 hours	Within the past 24 hours.	Body rash with itching or fever.	Itchy head, active head lice.	Redness, itching, and/or "crusty" drainage from eye.	Hospital stay and/or ER Visit
I AM READY TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL WHEN I AM....						
Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication i.e. Tylenol, Motrin	Free from vomiting for at least 2 solid meals	Free from diarrhea for at least 24 hours	Free from rash itching, or or fever. I have been evaluated by my doctor if needed.	Treated with appropriate lice treatment at home and proof is provided to nurse.	Evaluated by my doctor and have note to return to school	Released by my medical provider to return to school.

Absence/Dismissal During the School Day

Early dismissal should be limited to doctor, dentist, or legal appointments. A written note from a parent is required. Parents must ring the doorbell to check students in or out. School personnel will escort younger students.

Absences and chronicle early dismissals are counted as follows: 1½–3 hours = half-day, 3+ hours = full day. Students may walk home only with written parent permission. (This does not apply to students who are tardy or dismissed to receive service in the public school.)

Bus Transportation

Southbridge resident students in grades K-8 who live one mile or more from the school are eligible for bus transportation through AA Transportation.

Bus rules:

1. Be orderly in line; no cell phones.
2. Stay seated facing forward.
3. Speak quietly; avoid unnecessary noise.
4. Only talk to the driver when necessary.
5. Keep hands/arms inside.
6. No littering or throwing items out the window.

Misbehavior may result in suspension, and parents will be notified.

Cancellation of School

For inclement weather, Trinity Catholic Academy uses Teacherease calls by 6:30 a.m. and follows Southbridge Public Schools' schedule. Check WSRS (96.1 FM) or TV channels 4, 5, 7—look for “Southbridge Public Schools,” as Trinity is not named. One-hour delays = 9:15 a.m. start; two-hour delays = 10:15 a.m. No-school days require students to complete Google Classroom assignments; teachers of younger students will email work to parents. Early dismissal notifications are sent via Teacherease—please do not call the school as it ties up the lines.

Students from other towns follow Southbridge announcements. Parents are to make individual decisions as to the feasibility of getting students to school safely or to pick them up early in case of storms.

Drop off and Pick Up

There are two areas for morning drop-off. Pine Street is used to drop off students to the parking lot and in inclement weather at the front door. If you park on the opposite side of the school and walk your child to the front door, please use the crosswalk. There is a teacher on duty to welcome your child. The front of the school is a no parking area. If you need to assist your child out of the car, please pull all the way up as to not block the flow of drop off.

In the afternoon, cars **must** queue up ***on Hamilton St. to turn right onto Marcy St. and make a right-hand turn into the parking lot from Marcy St. Please do not approach the parking lot from the other direction. It causes traffic back-ups on Marcy St.*** You will be directed by teachers to your spot. All students will be dismissed through the Pre-school door. **The front steps on Pine St. are not an alternate pick-up site.** Parents must remain in their cars and proceed through the regular pick-up process.

Parents are asked to pay close attention during the pick-up process. It is recommended that **cell phones not be used at this time.** Please follow the traffic directions given by the teachers on duty.

The main office should be notified by telephone if a child is to go home in a different carpool or by a different means on a given day.

The drop-off and pick-up procedures run smoothly when all cooperate and follow the rules.

Family Vacations

Vacations should align with the school calendar, as absences during school are **not excused**. Teachers may provide work at their discretion. Missed assignments must be requested and completed within the same number

of days absent. Long-term projects must be submitted before vacation for full credit. Responsibility for missed work rests with the student and parents.

School Hours

School Hours:

- Pre-K: 8:15 AM – 2:20 PM (Pickup at the Pre-K “Garden” door.)
- K–8: 8:15 AM – 2:45 PM

Students not at prayer by 8:15 AM are tardy and must get a late pass from the office.

Arrival & Dismissal:

- Doors open at 7:45 AM; early arrivals wait in the gym.
- Prayer and announcements start at 2:40 PM, followed by dismissal.

After-School Program:

- Students not picked up by 3:00 PM are sent to the program.
- Pickup is by 5:30 PM; repeated late pickups may result in loss of After-School privileges and additional fees.
- Charges for After-School Program use are applied to your FACTS.

ASP FEE SCHEDULE (Please note the fee is per child.)

2:45—3:00	0 Units / Free
3:01—3:30	1 Unit / \$4.00
3:31—4:00	2 Units / \$8.00
4:01—4:30	3 Units / \$12.00
4:31—5:00	4 Units / \$16.00
5:01—5:30	5 Units / \$20.00

Tardies

Students in Pre-K through Grade 8 who arrive after 8:15 a.m. will be marked tardy. Tardies are considered unexcused unless accompanied by a doctor's note.

*Documented arrival time is based on when they are checked in at the main office.

***Each tardy entry equals .2 unexcused absences. 5 unexcused tardy entries equal 1 unexcused absence.**

*Tardiness may impact a student’s academic performance, can disrupt the flow of the class, and impacts consideration for the National Junior Honor Society membership (grades 6-8).

* In cases of excessive tardiness, the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required to meet with the principal. In addition, disciplinary consequences, including detention, may be assigned at the principal's discretion.

DISCIPLINE

Bullying and Cyberbullying

Trinity Catholic Academy promotes respect and a safe, bully-free environment. Bullying, harassment, or intimidation, including cyberbullying, is prohibited. Reports are promptly and confidentially investigated by the principal. Confirmed threat to the school, a student, or staff member is cause for immediate expulsion. In accordance with M.G.L. c.71 & 370 Trinity Catholic Academy’s Bully Prevention Plan will include on-going professional development of all staff. Notice to parents/guardians will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00, M.G.L. c. 71 & 370.

Conduct

Trinity Catholic Academy is a Catholic school where all members are expected to respect others.

- **Cheating:** Results in no credit and possible detention, suspension, or expulsion.
- **Distractions:** Items that hinder learning may be confiscated.

- **Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco:** Possession or use leads to confiscation, suspension or expulsion, and possible legal action.
- **Fighting/Harassment/Bullying:** Subject to detention, suspension, or expulsion.
- **Gum:** Not allowed.
- **Respect:** Students must respect all people and property; repeated disrespect may result in written warnings, detention, suspension or expulsion.
- **Weapons:** Prohibited; confiscation, suspension/expulsion, and legal notification may occur.

Detention: Issued for rule violations, missing homework, or conduct issues. Parents receive written notice; the principal sets the date/time. Detention takes priority over other activities. Skipping detention results in additional detentions served consecutively.

Suspension: Out-of-school suspensions prohibit campus attendance and participation in extracurriculars. Students must complete classwork and tests but receive no credit.

Expulsion: Students who threaten themselves or others, or whose parents violate the “Parents as Partners” agreement, may be expelled and barred from returning.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Eligibility to Participate in Extracurricular Activities

To participate in extracurricular activities, students must be enrolled at Trinity Catholic Academy and meet all program requirements. Withdrawal from the school or failure to meet requirements results in ineligibility or academic probation. If absent for an illness, students are not permitted to attend events the day of or the following day.

Participation is a privilege. Students must maintain at least a C- in all subjects and no N or U in conduct/effort in all subjects. Progress reports and report cards determine eligibility. Academic probation lasts three weeks initially and is reviewed every two weeks; students on probation cannot attend practices, games, or meetings. Students absent on Friday may not participate in that day or evening’s activities.

Sports/Clubs

TCA offers clubs including Drama, Choir, Art, Lego, Student Council, FIAT, and NJHS, as well as sports like basketball, cheerleading, running club, and karate. See the Athletics Handbook for participation rules and expectations.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Asbestos

In compliance with AHERA, the Asbestos Inspection Report and Management Plan is on file in the principal’s office and available for review during school hours upon request.

Child Abuse Laws

Trinity Catholic Academy abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Massachusetts. This law mandates that all cases of **suspected** abuse and/or neglect be reported to the Department of Children and Families.

Crisis Plan

Trinity Catholic Academy has a crisis plan for lockdowns or evacuations. Staff are trained to ensure student safety. In an emergency, students may be relocated to:

1. St. Mary Church

2. Notre Dame Church
3. Another secure site if necessary.

Fire Drills

State Law requires that fire drills be held regularly. During the fire drills, students and teachers should follow these regulations:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds.
2. Close windows and doors; lights are left on throughout the building.
3. Walk to the assigned place briskly, in single file at all times, and in silence.
4. Stand in two rows, facing the building.
5. Return to building when signal is given.

Force Majeure.

The School's duties and obligations under this Contract shall be suspended immediately without notice during all periods that the School building is closed because of force majeure events including, but not limited to, any fire, act of God, weather disaster, war, governmental action, act of terrorism, epidemic, pandemic or any other event beyond the School's control. If such an event occurs, the School's duties and obligations in this Contract will be postponed until such time as the School, in its sole discretion, may safely reopen. In the event that the School is closed for a period of time or cannot re-open due to an event under this clause, the School is under no obligation to refund any portion of the tuition paid.

Immunizations

Trinity Catholic Academy requires state-mandated immunizations. For medical or religious exemptions, parents must provide annually: a physician's clearance, a yearly physical, a letter stating the exemption reason, and if there is an outbreak of a disease for which your child is not immunized, your child will need to remain at home until all danger of the outbreak has passed. Complete immunization records are required for all students. Pre-K, K, 3rd, and 7th graders must submit an updated physical before school; no exceptions.

Live Lice Policy

Trinity Catholic Academy enforces a "No Live Lice" policy. If lice are found, parents must immediately pick up the child for treatment. The next day, the parent must bring the child for a nurse/principal inspection; re-entry may be denied if lice remain. Parents must follow CDC guidance for treating the child at home.

Lunch

Parents must send their children to school with a healthy lunch and a drink, complete with utensils, if needed, and napkins. Please, no breakable containers. A healthy lunch is considered a balance of fruits, vegetables, protein, whole grains, and healthy beverages. Candy, soda, and foods with high sugar are not considered healthy.

Medical/Health Policy

Trinity Catholic Academy values student health and supports children with medical needs. Parents must provide medical records at enrollment. The nurse maintains health information, updates staff, and trains faculty in Emergency Action Plans; many staff are CPR-certified.

All prescription medications must be delivered to the office by a parent in the original pharmacy container with a physician-signed permission form, including the child's name, doctor, dosage, and schedule. Students may not carry medication; the nurse may administer over-the-counter meds with parent written permission that includes dosage. Parents must report any changes in medication or dosage.

Restraining Orders

The office must be notified immediately of any restraining order. To restrict a parent's contact with a child, a court-issued copy and a photo of the individual must be provided.

School Safety

Trinity Catholic Academy prioritizes safety. Threats to anyone's well-being, including online or in jest, and any harassment are taken seriously. Offending students may face detention, suspension, expulsion, and/or legal action.

Building Safety

For the safety of all students and staff, the school building always remains locked. Security cameras with audio capability are installed around the perimeter of the building and in common areas inside the school, including the cafeteria, hallways, and gymnasium.

Search

The school reserves the right to search anything brought on school property. This includes cell phones and other electronic devices.

Smoking

Smoking of any kind is not allowed on school property. Cigars, pipes, tobacco of any type, marijuana, e-cigarettes, or vapers are not permitted.

Visitors

All visitors must sign in at the main office, wear a visitor badge, and sign out when leaving. Do not hold doors open—guests must be buzzed in. Parent volunteers may not enter classrooms unannounced, as it disrupts instruction.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING (CORI)

All volunteers are required to complete the Code of Ministerial Conduct training, Safe Environment training, and CORI check. Below is the order in which you should complete the necessary training.

1. Email Cathleen Peloquin, the Safe Environment training coordinator from the Worcester Diocese, at cpeloquin@worcesterdiocese.org. She will provide you with a link where you can complete the training online. After watching the video, please print out the certificate and bring it to our main office. If you feel you have already done the Safe Environment training, please contact Ms. Hann-Gauthier and she will double check.
2. The Code of Ministerial Conduct training can be done through the Worcester Diocese website. Please click on Healing & Prevention located under the Departments tab, then Safe Environment, and lastly Code of Ministerial Conduct. Click Revised Code of Ministerial Conduct 2021 and read through the information. Lastly, click the blue box, complete the acknowledgment form and be sure to choose Trinity as the Parish/Organization.
3. **Only after the above training has been completed** can we have you fill out the CORI form. We will need a copy of your driver's license to submit to the diocese. It takes 7-10 days after they receive the form for the CORI check to be completed. **We cannot allow anyone who has not complied with these requirements to volunteer in any capacity.**

MISCELLANEOUS

Animals

It is the policy of Trinity Catholic Academy to protect children and adults who may have allergies to animals. Therefore, other than during the Blessing of the Animals in October, pets of any kind are not to be brought into the school building, even if caged or on a leash. Exceptions may be made with principal approval.

Birthdays

Students may bring treats to celebrate birthdays but should not exchange gifts. Party invitations may only be distributed if sent to the entire grade. Pre-K–8 students may dress out-of-uniform on their birthday or half-birthday for summer birthdays.

PARENT’S ROLE

Parents As Partners

Parents are asked to:

- Set rules and routines for sleep, punctuality, dress code, homework, and nutrition.
- Participate in school activities and conferences.
- Ensure students pay for any damage to school property.
- Notify the school of absences, tardies, contact changes, or special circumstances affecting the child’s well-being.
- Meet financial obligations and return requested forms promptly.
- Stay informed via school communications and support the school’s religious, educational, and disciplinary goals.
- Attend Mass, model Catholic values, treat staff respectfully, and avoid defaming school personnel, parents, or students.
- Inform the school of any special situations regarding the student’s well-being, safety, and health.
- Read school notes, emails, and website to show interest in their child’s entire education.
- Treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student challenges.
- Refrain from defaming school personnel, other parents, or students in any form, whether by word, through social media, email, or in actions.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

Trinity Catholic Academy’s Parent Teacher Organization works to support and enhance the educational ministry of the school. ***It is a vital part of the TCA experience.*** Parent education and building community are goals of this organization.

Parent’s Role in Education

At Trinity Catholic Academy, we value partnering with parents, who are the primary educators of their children. Choosing our school reflects your commitment to support your child’s growth spiritually, academically, socially, and morally.

Children learn best when school teachings are reinforced by strong family examples of Catholic/Christian values, respect, and a personal relationship with God. A strong partnership between home and school is essential for student success. We ask that families refrain from making negative or disparaging comments about faculty or staff in front of students, as this can weaken the trust and respect necessary for a healthy educational environment.

Students naturally explore new interests, so they need understanding, guidance, and discipline. They must take responsibility for their work, grades, and assignments, including during absences.

Together, let us commit to this partnership, supporting your child to reach their full potential.

Parents as Volunteers

All school volunteers, including field trip chaperones, must complete diocesan Safe Environment training, sign the Code of Ministerial Conduct, and pass a CORI background check. Volunteers should dress modestly, sign in at the office, and wear a yellow lanyard.

Volunteers assist administration teachers and/or students. For this reason, siblings are not permitted during meetings, field trips, class parties, etc.

Volunteers will be needed for:

Cookout after Opening Mass

Fall Appeal Weekend to speak at all masses

Haunted House
Santa's Workshop
Catholic Schools Week-Open House
Silent Auction
Golf Tournament
Field Day
Other Activities

Volunteering helps you spend time with your children in another way. Don't let someone else enjoy your children.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Lockers

Each student is assigned a locker or cubby for books and supplies and may use it only at designated times. The school may inspect lockers at any time. Schedules and pencil holders may be posted inside with magnets only; nothing may be attached outside, including stickers. Teachers may label lockers with student names.

School Property

Students must care for school and personal property. Damages must be paid in full. Textbooks require proper covers (no book socks) and no writing. We find brown paper bags work best. Chromebooks must be used responsibly; misuse may result in loss of device and a zero on the assignment. Fines or replacement of damaged/lost items must be resolved before final reports, transcripts, or diplomas are issued.

TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION

Cell Phones/Electronic Devices

*All personal electronic devices must be **powered off** upon arrival to the TCA campus and may not be powered on until leaving the TCA campus. This means that there will be no use of electronic devices before school starts, before being picked up by the bus, or before being picked up by a parent or guardian at dismissal or from the after-school program, or during school events such as the Science/S.S. fairs, plays, or practices of any kind. All electronic devices must be parked for the day in a designated place in the classroom upon arrival to homeroom. In the event that a student is permitted to use a personal electronic device for educational purposes, it will be entirely at the discretion of the teacher. Electronic devices include but are not limited to cell phones, iPads, smart glasses, earbuds, smart watches, headphones, and personal computers.*

Students in grades 4-8 are permitted to bring a cell phone to school and **MUST** abide by the rules described above. The cell phone may be picked up by the student at dismissal. Cell phones are not allowed in grades K-3. Cell phones or electronic devices taken away from students because of improper or unsanctioned use will be given to the principal and returned to the parent(s)/guardians(s). In such a case, our disciplinary and conduct codes will be invoked. No electronic devices (excluding those for medical reasons) may be kept in lockers, backpacks, or on one's person; they **must** be parked with the teacher. The school assumes no responsibility for damage or loss of any of these devices; nor for inappropriate content or material that might be viewed or shared by students, or inappropriate messages sent or received by students during school hours or during extracurricular events as a result of access to the internet by way of data service to their cell phones or electronic devices or by way of the TCA network. Internet safety is discussed in school and during bullying training provided by the District Attorney's office. Parents are urged to discuss the proper use of electronic devices and internet safety with their children.

Photos and Videos

Trinity Catholic Academy may use student photos and videos in school-related publications and media unless parents notify the principal in writing. Signing the handbook acknowledges agreement with this policy.

Technology Concerns

Blogs: Posts on social media (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, etc.) that are defamatory toward the school, faculty, students, or parish may result in disciplinary action or student dismissal without tuition refund. Parents should avoid creating class/grade social media pages.

YouTube may contain inappropriate content; parents are encouraged to monitor use and apply parental controls.

Facebook® and other Social Media Postings of Student Photographs: Trinity Catholic Academy works to protect the confidentiality rights of all students. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1973 (FERPA) and the Child Protection Act of 2013 (CPA) were designed to protect personally identifiable information of minors. TCA adheres to these laws in its attempt to protect the privacy rights of all students. As a result, the parents of students enrolled at TCA are forbidden from posting photographs taken at school sponsored events that include the images of students other than their own on their personal Facebook®, Instagram, etc. accounts or pages. Such postings are a violation of TCA's adherence to FERPA and the Child Protection Act. The students of parents who post such photos may be separated from Trinity Catholic Academy. In the event that a student is involuntarily separated from the school, there will be **no reimbursement for tuition and/or fees.**

Sexting: Students involved in possession or transmission of inappropriate photos or text messages on their cell phones or other electronic devices face suspension and/or expulsion.

Texting: Students should at no time be involved in texting during the course of the school day. Students involved in texting at school face detention, suspension and/or expulsion.

Virtual Reality Sites: Virtual Reality Sites such as, but not limited to, www.there.com® and www.seconddlife.com® pose a developmental and moral risk to the life of a student. Parents are cautioned to be aware of the online sites visited by their children, knowing that predators often are not only living in a neighborhood, but within the home via a computer.

Parent Alert: Parents are asked to monitor their child's use of cell phones and social media with friends, as inappropriate messages can cause hurt feelings and disrupt learning and social environments at school.

Telephone

Students may use the office phone only in emergencies and with permission. Classroom phones and teachers' cell phones are off-limits. Forgotten items or social plans do not qualify as emergencies.

UNIFORM INFORMATION

Lost and Left

Lost items should be turned into the office and are kept for 30 days before being discarded. Students must pay the replacement cost and shipping for lost library books, textbooks, or workbooks.

Out of Uniform Guidelines

When students are out of uniform, hair, jewelry, and makeup rules apply. Students are expected to be in uniform for *All School* special celebration Masses.

Students may wear:

- jeans
- sneakers or other closed-toe shoes
- shorts no shorter than three inches above the knee, may be worn from **August 24-October 8** and from **May 3 to the end of school.**
- skirts no shorter than three inches above the knee
- leggings covered with a loose top no shorter than three inches above the knee
- sweatshirts
- jogging suits
- dresses no shorter than three inches above the knee
- pants
- clear nail polish
- **must wear socks: visible above the shoe line**

Students may not wear:

- flip-flop sandals of any kind
- open toe or back shoes
- crocs
- tank tops, crop tops, or midribs, the stomach must be covered when arms are raised
- T-shirts with inappropriate writing
- shorts with writing across the buttocks
- tennis shoes that convert to roller skates
- bike shorts
- pajama pants/lounge pants/flannel pants
- make-up
- low cut blouses/tops
- clothing that is extremely tight
- hats
- jewelry—same guidelines as regular uniform
- Pimple patches (acceptable with a doctor's note)

Good Rule: If you think you shouldn't wear it, you shouldn't.

All uniform rules are at the principal's discretion, and violations carry the same consequences as uniform code breaches.

Uniforms and Dress Code

- All uniform pieces must be ordered online at **www.landsend.com** using **Preferred School Number: 900196874**. Lands' End has conveniently organized uniforms by gender and grade. It is suggested that you create an account to save your information for future use.

Lands' End Uniforms is the one and only vendor with whom the school holds a contract and from which uniforms may be purchased.

All students must be in uniform every day. There will be out-of-uniform days which will be announced during the course of the school year (please see *Out of Uniform Guidelines*). If there is a time when the prescribed uniform cannot for some legitimate reason be worn, a note from the parent/guardian must be written to the principal. Students who are out of uniform without this excuse will be sent to the office and the parent will be called to bring the proper clothing.

Uniforms (which includes P.E. uniforms) must be worn for all Feasts and Solemnities (Special Masses) and special events.

Uniform Guidelines

DRESS CODE

Complete uniform is required every day. Students must be in uniform upon entering the school in the morning. **Any exception to this policy will be left to the discretion of the principal including removal of sweaters during warmer weather.** Parents should see that the dress code is followed, especially for students in grades Pre-K-2. **Please be sure that your child comes to school properly dressed and well groomed. All uniforms should be cleaned and pressed regularly.**

If a student in grades 3-8 is out of dress code:

- First offense: verbal warning
- Second offense: written warning to be signed by parents
- Third offense: meeting with the principal

Students in grades Pre-K-2 will receive notes or phone calls to alert parents.

Lands' End Uniforms is the only vendor with whom we have a contract. Students wearing uniforms not purchased from Lands' End Uniforms will be considered out of dress code and parents will be notified.

The present uniform consists of the following:

Pre-K: All students will wear red shirts, navy pants or shorts that must be purchased at Lands' End. Girls may also choose the red jumper purchased at Lands' End. Students will wear sneakers of their choice and navy or white ankle socks, knee socks or tights (purchased anywhere). It is suggested that girls wear navy or black shorts under their jumpers (purchased anywhere). Pre-K students are expected to be in dress code every day they come to school. Navy shorts may be worn from the first day of school until October 8 and from May 3 to end of school. Pants may be worn all year in Pre-K.

Boys (K-8)

- Navy/Khaki uniform dress pants. Pant length should go to the ankle and have no fraying at the bottom.
- White, light blue or navy blue soft collared shirt with Trinity Logo (shirts must be worn tucked in)
- Uniform navy-blue crew neck sweater, cardigan, **fleece**, or V-neck vest with Trinity Logo must be worn with pants.
- Navy/khaki shorts may be worn from the first day of school until October 8 and from May 3 to end of school. **Only white or black** socks that are visible above the sneaker are worn with shorts. Sweaters or vests are optional with shorts but must be worn with pants.
- **All black shoes** are worn with pants (no moccasins, crocs, deck shoes, work boots, or high cut shoes). Rubber soled shoes are recommended for safety on the playground, especially for younger students. Low cut sneakers may be worn. Sneakers worn with pants must be **entirely** black, including the sole, brand logo, and shoelaces.
- Navy blue crew socks must be worn with navy blue pants. Khaki crew socks must be worn with khaki pants. Socks must match each other.
- Only the school sweater, fleece, or vest may be worn in the classroom. The optional jacket and spirit wear sweatshirts are not to be worn in the classroom.

Girls (K-3)

- Uniform jumper (Jumper should come to the child's **knees**.)
- White, light blue or navy blue soft collared shirt with Trinity logo (shirts must be worn tucked in)

- Optional Uniform navy-blue cardigan or **fleece** with Trinity logo. Sweaters are not required with jumpers.
- Black dress shoes (no sneakers, moccasins, crocs, deck shoes, work boots or high cut shoes or clogs). No platform shoes. All dress shoes should have no higher than a 1-inch heel. Heel measurement will be from back of shoe. Rubber soled shoes are recommended for safety.
- Knee socks must be navy or white
- Navy or white tights are recommended in cold weather.
- Socks or tights must be worn at all times. Socks must match each other. No nylons.
- Navy/khaki shorts may be worn from the first day of school until October 8 and from May 3 to end of school. **Only white or black** athletic socks that are visible above the sneaker are worn with shorts. Sweaters or vests are optional with shorts.
- Navy/Khaki pants may be worn year-round. Pant length should go to the ankle and have no fraying at the bottom. Sweaters, fleece, or vests must be worn with pants. **All black shoes** are worn with pants (no moccasins, crocs, deck shoes, work boots, or high cut shoes). Rubber soled shoes are recommended for safety on the playground, especially for younger students. Low cut sneakers may be worn. Sneakers worn with pants must be **entirely** black, including the sole, brand logo, and shoelaces.
- Only the school sweater, fleece, or vest may be worn in the classroom. The optional jacket and spirit wear sweatshirts are not to be worn in the classroom.
- Improperly fitting uniforms will require the purchase of a new one.

Girls (4-8)

- Navy/plaid uniform skirt (**must fit properly**).
- White, light blue or navy blue soft collared shirt with Trinity Logo (shirts must be worn tucked in)
- Navy blue uniform sweater, **fleece**, or vest with Trinity logo must be worn with skirt.
- Black dress shoes (no sneakers, work boots, moccasins, crocs, deck shoes, high cut shoes or clogs) are worn with skirts. No platform shoes. All dress shoes should have no higher than a 1-inch heel. Heel measurement will be from the back of the shoe.
- Knee socks must be navy or white. Older girls may wear nylons.
- Tights, navy or white, may be worn in colder weather.
- Socks must be worn at all times and must be the same color. Only the school sweater, fleece, or vest may be worn in the classroom. The optional jacket and spirit wear sweatshirt are not to be worn in the classroom.
- Navy/khaki shorts may be worn from the first day of school until October 8 and from May 3 to end of school. **Only white or black** athletic socks that are visible above the top of the sneaker are worn with shorts. Sweaters are optional with shorts.
- Navy/Khaki pants may be worn year-round. Pant length should go to the ankle and have no fraying at the bottom. Sweaters, fleece, or vests must be worn with pants. **All black shoes** are worn with pants (no moccasins, crocs, deck shoes, work boots, or high cut shoes). Rubber soled shoes are recommended for safety on the playground, especially for younger students. Low cut sneakers may be worn. Sneakers worn with pants must be **entirely** black, including the sole, brand logo, and shoelaces.
- Improperly fitting uniforms will require the purchase of a new one.

Boys in grades Pre-K-8

- Hair must be neat and well groomed and the **child's natural color**. No bizarre or unusual hairstyles or color will be tolerated **including tipped ends**. This includes but is not limited to mohawks, braids, beads, and/or mullets. Boys' hair must be no longer than the natural hairline and kept above the ears and eyebrows fully visible.
- Boys will not wear earrings or bracelets. They are allowed to wear a watch and a religious symbol on a chain.

Girls in grades Pre-K-8

- **One set of stud earrings or ½ inch hoops worn in the lobes of the ear are the only type of earrings allowed.** Girls may wear a watch and a religious symbol on a chain. *No bracelets are allowed.*
- Girls are not allowed to wear makeup or fake nails and will be asked to remove it if they wear it to school. Chapstick must be colorless. No glitter products are allowed at any time. If girls wish to wear nail polish, it must be clear. No other color is allowed, including dress down days.
- Hair must be neat and well groomed and the **child's natural color**. No bizarre or unusual hairstyles or colors will be tolerated including, but not limited to dying, tipping, foiling, streaking, and/or highlighting. Hairpieces, beads, twist crochet, and extensions are not allowed in school. Hair must be kept out of the eyes. **These rules apply through and including graduation.**
- Hair can be tied back, held back by a headband, or tucked behind the ears. If girls wear bangs, they need to be kept neat and out of the eyes, even as they are being grown out as girls get older, using a headband or barrette if necessary. Hair piled on the top of the head in a loose bun will not be allowed.
- Headbands should go with the uniform. Girls may wear a rosette or bow, as long as it does not become a distraction. Bows may be up to 6 inches across and may have a 6-inch tail. Handkerchiefs are not allowed.

Physical Education Uniforms

Mandatory PE uniforms for grades K-8 must be purchased through Lands' End. Pre-K students do not wear the Physical Education (P.E.) uniform. Pre-K wear the regular school uniform on P.E. days. The gym uniform consists of the following:

- T-shirt and sweatpants with Trinity Catholic Academy printed on both. Uniform shorts and sweatshirts with Trinity Catholic Academy printed on them are also available for the warmer and colder months. T-shirts may be worn under sweatshirts during the winter months.
- **Torn sweatpants are never allowed.**
- **Fundraiser sweatshirts are not part of the official gym uniform.**
- Sneakers must be worn. **Sneakers must be of an athletic type: basketball, running, or walking, and should lace or close with Velcro. Any color sock may be worn with gym uniforms as long as they are visible above the top of the sneaker. All sneakers with laces must be properly tied.** This will prevent injuries to students.
- If other garments, such as camisoles are worn under the PE T-shirt or sweatshirt, they must be tucked in. If they are visible, a verbal warning will be given. Beyond a verbal warning, all rules apply for being out of the proper dress code. Eighth grade sweatshirts may be worn on P.E. day.

NOTE: Once regular uniform shorts can no longer be worn, gym shorts can no longer be worn.

A NOTE FROM BISHOP MCMANUS

CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND THE HUMAN PERSON

All entities of the Catholic Church exist for the purpose of furthering the saving mission of Jesus Christ and must operate in accord with the truths revealed by God in both natural law and divine revelation. In particular, our Catholic schools must remain in the fullness of the truth in order to carry out their proper mission:

Since true education must strive for complete formation of the human person that looks to his or her final end as well as to the common good of societies, children and youth are to be nurtured in such a way that they are able to develop their physical, moral, and intellectual talents harmoniously, acquire a more perfect sense of responsibility and right use of freedom, and are formed to participate actively in social life. (Code of Canon Law, c. 795).

These truths extend into every facet of our lives, including human sexuality.

Regarding sexuality and sexual identity, the Catechism of the Catholic Church states: "By creating the human being man and woman, God gives personal dignity equally to the one and the other. Each of them, man and woman, should

acknowledge and accept his sexual identity.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church (“CCC”), 2360-2363). By its very nature, sexuality is ordered to the conjugal love of a man and woman within the bond of marriage (c. 1055). As a result, marriage, which is a partnership of the whole of life, is always ordered by its very nature to both the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children (Ibid.). All persons are called to chastity, to be lived out according to one’s state in life (CCC, #2337-2359).

These teachings of the Church are not mere antiquated notions. In fact, Pope Francis has repeatedly stressed the importance of a proper understanding of our sexuality, warning of the challenge posed by “the various forms of an ideology of gender that denies the difference and reciprocity in nature of a man and a woman and envisages a society without sexual differences” (Amoris Laetitia (“AL”), #56). Pope Francis further notes that “biological sex and the sociocultural role of sex (gender) can be distinguished but not separated,” and that although we must always be “understanding of human weakness and the complexities of life,” that does not require us to “accept ideologies that attempt to sunder what are inseparable aspects of reality” (Ibid.). Ultimately, “[w]e are creatures, and not omnipotent,” and we must accept and respect our humanity “as it was created” (Ibid.; see also Gen. 1:27, Matthew 19:4, and Mark 10:6). The Holy Father then stresses that “the young need to be helped to accept their own body as it was created,” so that “we can joyfully accept the specific gifts of another man or woman, the work of God the Creator” (AL, #285).

As Pope Francis notes, we must always respect the sacred dignity of each individual person, but that does not mean the Church must accept the confused notions of a secular gender ideology. We must not demean or deny the sincerity and struggle of those who experience same-sex attraction or who feel their true gender identity is different from their biological sex. Rather, we seek to accompany them on their journey of life, offering them the light of the Gospel and the truth of the Church’s moral teaching as they try to find their way forward. These truths are not merely faith-based; rather, such realities are also knowable through the use of properly functioning senses and right reason (Pope St. John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, #22).

We do not serve anyone’s greater good by falsifying the truth, for it is only the truth that frees us for the full life that God offers to each of us. Thus, when a person experiences same-sex attraction or some form of gender dysphoria, such struggles do not change the biological fact of how God created that person, and it would be untruthful for the Catholic Church or our Catholic schools to pretend otherwise. The policies of Trinity Catholic Academy, therefore, must reflect these fundamental truths.

Bullying/Harassment/Violence and Human Sexuality

The Catholic faith holds that all persons have inherent human dignity and are thus deserving of innate respect as a person – without exception. Bullying, harassment, or threats or acts of violence against any student based on that student’s perceived sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity, will not be tolerated. Neither this section, nor any other provision of the Handbook, is intended, or should be interpreted, as submitting the Bishop, the School or any other Diocesan or Diocesan-related entity to any state or federal law or regulation, nor any judgment or finding by any Massachusetts or federal agency, with respect to any issue involving gender identity, to the extent inconsistent with the doctrine and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, as to which the Bishop and School reserve all their legal rights, defenses and remedies under the United States Constitution and any other applicable law.

Chastity

All persons are called to chastity in accordance with their state in life. For purposes of the school environment, chastity also encompasses modesty in language, appearance, dress, and behavior. Accordingly, romantic or sexual displays of affection are not permitted at school.

Sexual Orientation and Same-Sex Attraction

Students may not advocate, celebrate, or express same-sex attraction in such a way as to cause confusion or distraction in the context of Catholic school classes, activities, or events. When discussing homosexuality or homosexual inclinations in school settings, the use of the term “same-sex attraction” is preferred, as it is a more appropriate description in accordance with the truths of Catholic faith and morals.

Gender Dysphoria (Transgenderism)

All students are expected to conduct themselves at school in a manner consistent with their biological sex. School practice shall consider the gender of all students as being consistent with their biological sex, including, but not limited to, the following: participation in school athletics; school-sponsored dances; dress and uniform policies; the use of changing facilities, showers, locker rooms, and bathrooms (with rare exceptions only on a limited, case-by-case basis, to be determined by the principal of the school); titles, names, and pronouns; and official school documents. If a student's expression of gender, sexual identity, or sexuality should cause confusion or disruption at the school, or if it should mislead others, cause scandal, or have the potential for causing scandal, then the matter will first be discussed with the student and his/her parents. If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of the school, whose primary goal must always be to uphold Catholic truths and moral principles, then the student may be dismissed from the school after the parents are first given the opportunity to withdraw the student from the school.

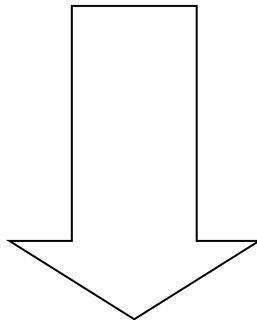
OFFICIAL SCHOOL DOCUMENTS

Diplomas, transcripts, school records, and any other official documents of the school ("official school documents") shall be issued in conformity with the student's biological sex as based upon physical differences at birth. Official school documents are also historical documents and, as such, must accurately reflect the name and identity of the alumnus/alumna during the time in which he/she was enrolled at and graduated from the school. If after graduation an alumnus/alumna legally changes his/her name, for whatever reason, and requests new versions of his/her official school documents, the official school documents may be issued in the following format: "Original Name, a.k.a. New Legal Name."

****Right to Amend**

Trinity Catholic Academy or the Principal reserves the right to amend this Handbook at any time. Notice of amendments will be posted on our web site.

See signature page below



Section 1: Family Signature Page

This Handbook serves as a reference for the school year. Please print and return the signed form to school by Monday, August 24, 2026. You are also welcome to email it to sarah.gauthier@tca11.com. I have read the 2026–2027 Parent/Student Handbook and agree to follow its policies. I have also read the Agreement for the use of computers and telecommunications policies and agree to follow it.

Family Name (Print Please) _____
Parents' Signature and Date _____
Student Signature and Date _____
Student Signature and Date _____

Section 2: TRINITY CATHOLIC ACADEMY-Parent/Guardian Consent Form **AGREEMENT FOR THE USE OF COMPUTERS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

Trinity Catholic Academy provides students computer and internet access to support learning. While reasonable care ensures appropriate educational content, TCA and the Diocese cannot fully control online material. Parents are responsible for guiding their children on ethical and legal use. Families may decide whether their child may use these resources. Refer to the Parent/Student Handbook for details.

I am the parent/guardian of the below-named student. I have read the Agreement for the Use of Computers and Telecommunications, and I have explained it to my child. I also understand my own and the student's responsibilities regarding computer hardware, software and internet access at TCA.

Please Check One:

_____ I hereby request that my child have access to, and use of, the telecommunications resources at Trinity Catholic Academy. I also hereby indemnify and hold harmless the Diocese of Worcester and TCA from any claim or loss resulting from an infraction by the student of the policy or any applicable law.

_____ I do NOT wish my child to have access to, or use of, the telecommunications resources at Trinity Catholic Academy.

Section 3: Trinity Catholic Academy After-School Program Information Sheet

Please list oldest to youngest:

1. Name of Child _____ Grade _____
2. Name of Child _____ Grade _____
3. Name of Child _____ Grade _____

Parents' Names _____
Phone Numbers _____

Please list all people (including a phone number) who are allowed to pick up your child from the After-School Program. Please make them aware that we reserve the right to ask for a legal photo ID if we are meeting them for the first time. If someone not listed presents themselves to pick up your child or children, we will not release your children to that person unless we are in possession of a note signed by a parent.

1. Name _____ Phone # _____
2. Name _____ Phone # _____
3. Name _____ Phone # _____

Students picked up after 5:30 p.m. will be charged a \$10 late fee in addition to the unit rate.